

House Republican Press Release

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GREENWICH DELEGATION: CALLS FOR STATE BELT TIGHTENING



GREENWICH- State Representatives Livvy Floren, Lile Gibbons and Dolly Powers today proposed state spending cuts to help eliminate a projected \$300 million budget deficit, highlighting government spending and projects in the state Capitol that the state cannot afford.

Rep. Lile Gibbons of Old Greenwich, cited numerous examples of Capitol projects and budget items - from \$1.7 million in printing costs, to expensive statues, \$255,000 in new signage and wasteful special legislative sessions – that should be eliminated because of the deficit.

Rep. Gibbons, who is a member of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding committee called for the legislature to act immediately on a bipartisan basis to close a budget gap of slightly less than 2 percent in the state's \$18 billion budget-- and not wait for more hearings or studies. Many other states are acting now to close deficits and he said Connecticut must do likewise,

“Everywhere else in Connecticut, people are tightening their belts because of today's economic realities. Let's lead by example and clean up our house here at the Capitol and take steps to cut the programs and spending that we as lawmakers directly control,” Rep. Floren, is a member of the legislature's Finance, Revenue and Bonding committee and a member of the Bonding sub-committee, said.

She added, “Taxpayers and voters have a right to know exactly how their elected officials will deal with this fiscal crisis. We should not be raising any taxes or raiding the state's rainy day fund. The financial crisis on Wall Street has already adversely hurt Greenwich we need to be pro-active in fixing the state's economic situation.”

Every state budget office and fiscal entity - Republican, Democrat or non-partisan - agrees that Connecticut faces mounting deficits.

Whether the examples are symbolic or significant, Republicans said the public has a right to know about government spending. They cited:

- A special legislative session last Dec. 5 that cost taxpayers \$1,000 per minute could have been replaced with a technical session at virtually no cost;

- 100 yards of European black marble is being replaced in the Legislative Office Building for \$200,000, even though there is no safety issue;
- \$255,000 in new signs throughout the building;
- Brand new Liquid Crystal Display screens have just been installed in hearing rooms replacing old televisions that Republicans said they never used in the first place;
- The state of Connecticut spends nearly \$300,000 on pagers despite technology that has rendered them obsolete.
- 65 separate local projects for House and Senate Democrats handed out by the Senate president and House Speaker for members totaling more than \$2.3 million compared to **zero** Republican projects.

“Towns and cities are having trouble issuing bonds because of the credit squeeze and every day we read of municipal projects that have been put on hold. We have to do the same,” Rep. Powers said.